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Your Input is Needed!

Sign up to serve on one of TML's task forces

Happy 2022! It's a new year - with new beginnings. And as we look ahead to 2022 - the League is excited about offering new opportunities for greater member involvement.

Last year, we embarked upon the first strategic plan rewrite since 2012. With the support of our partners at the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS), the plan will incorporate input from TML members, partners, and state government officials.

The purpose for the strategic plan is to produce a set of goals and objectives to guide the Tennessee Municipal League over the next three to five years.

We want to be the go-to organization for addressing the state's grand challenges, and the most powerful resource for growing Tennessee cities.

To help facilitate the process, we have created four sets of task forces who will do the bulk of the goal setting. Each task force will meet to establish goals for each of the areas of focus. The task forces will then present their goals to the full TML Board for consideration and to be included in the strategic plan, slated to be completed by August 2022.

- The four task forces are:
- Structure which includes representation, organizational design, and staffing;
- Communications which includes most formal means of communication, mobilization of membership and confer-
- Intergovernmental Relations - which includes key relation-



Dr. Ken Moore TML President & Franklin Mayor

ships with stakeholders, and advocacy efforts;

Process - which includes standard operating procedures, rules of conduct, and ethics.

Task Forces will have varied membership, including TML board members, city officials, and city staff members.

As we work to advocate for and unify Tennessee cities and towns, we hope you will get involved. This is your opportunity to provide input into your organization.

If you would like to serve on one of the task forces, please email Jackie Gupton at jgupton@tml1.org.

Our work – as a Municipal League - makes a difference. Together with a collective voice, we can engage our state and federal governments on the issues that matter to you. When our towns and cities stand together with one voice, the results benefit all of our

I encourage you to get involved with TML. Our success depends on you!

ken Moore

Rolfe gives behindthe-scenes look at how state landed Blue Oval

By KATE COIL TML Communications Specialist

Well before officials with Ford, SK Innovation, and the state of Tennessee gathered in Stanton in September 2021 to make the monumental Blue Oval City announcement, work had been going on for months behind the scenes to secure what is the largest investment in state history and part of the largest manufacturing investment ever made by Ford.

Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) Commissioner Bob Rolfe said the state had been marketing the Memphis Regional Megasite for a dozen years and had invested \$226 million into the property when economic development officials received a fateful call in February of last year.

"We had been aggressively marketing the state's industrial megasite going back over the last 12 years," Rolfe said. "Unfortunately or maybe fortunately – we had not been successful in this case, but being patient paid endorsement dividends. Ford Motor Company reached out to us in late February 2021, and like every project that is economic development-related, all major manufacturers are eager to get their product to market. A project like this could take a couple of years to evolve."

Tennessee was one of 16 states that began competing to land the major new development.

'We were responsible for providing an enormous amount of data," Rolfe said. "That included everything from workforce to the ability to deliver the amount of megawatts that Ford requires to water and wastewater. What made our challenge more interesting is that the megasite itself did not have any utilities, certainly not at the level and capacity requirements. The state had to provide water and wastewater for the site. We worked with TVA to make sure they could deliver the power. We worked with gas and fiber companies. We also had to convince Ford that we had a workforce that would be of size, of quality, and of skillset to meet that need of 5,800 full-time employees when the project opens."

To meet these needs, ECD pulled in other state departments to work on the project.

"Our job at ECD is to recruit the companies, and to negotiate the transaction," Rolfe said. "What was interesting about this project is it cuts across several departments in state government. TDOT is going to be responsible for building a lot of roads. General Services is going to be responsible for water and wastewater. The Tennessee Board of Regents is going to be responsible for building a TCAT on the Blue Oval campus. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development is responsible for helping prepare the workforce. You have all these departments working together. We at the state must deliver all of the promises we made to win this project."

In addition to coordinating with other state departments and outside agencies, ECD officials also had to make sure every aspect of the massive project stayed under

"A lot of work went on behind-the-scenes, and what we were probably proudest of was not only the good work but the ability to keep this confidential," Rolfe said. "We know from history and our Gov. Lee rolls out budget priorities

BY CAROLE GRAVES TML Communications Director

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee presented his proposed budget and spending plan for the coming year during his annual State of the State Address, held Jan. 31 during a joint session of the Tennessee General Assembly.

He said the theme of his speech "America at its Best," reinforced policies that support families, guard against "Big Government," encourage fiscal stewardship, and power the economy.

"Tennessee stands as a beacon to the rest of the country for how we can change lives when we control the size of government, prioritize efficiency and make smart and responsible investments. I am proud to propose a budget and 'America at Its Best' policies that reinforce freedom, innovation,



Lee delivered his fourth State of the State Address on Jan. 31.

exceptionalism and optimism,"

His proposed \$52.6 billion budget includes investments in

K-12 education, higher education, improving transportation infrastructure and economic development. See BUDGET on Page 4

Municipal leaders advocate for sales tax revenues restored to local communities

Join the Campaign **Contact your Legislator!**

The mayors of Tennessee's largest municipalities were recently in Nashville to meet with state leaders to discuss funding issues for local governments.

They join other municipalities across the state in support of two legislative initiatives by the Tennessee Municipal League to restore the historical revenue-sharing relationship between the state of Tennessee and local governments as it pertains to state-shared sales tax (SSST) and the single-article sales tax cap.

Senate Bill 2076 sponsored by Sen. Richard Briggs and House Bill 2012 by Rep. Dale Carr would restore the 55-year revenue sharing relationship and allow cities to share in 100% of the state sales tax revenues flowing to the state's general fund.

Senate Bill 2469 sponsored by Sen. Bill Powers and House Bill 2562 by Rep. Gary Hicks seeks to allow local governments to receive their local share of sales tax collected between \$1,600 to \$3,200 on a single article that is taxed.

In 2002, the state was confronted with a serious budget crisis, and increased the sales tax rate from 6% to 7%. The revenues associated with this 1% increase in the state sales tax rate accrue entirely to the state's general fund, precluding cities from sharing in this increase.

As a result of this change to



TNECD Commissioner Bob Rolfe

business that if you leak you lose. That's how they have leverage. Companies don't want states or locals talking about a project until that company has made a very definitive decision. It's not new to us to operate under maximum confidentiality."

West Tennessee and the cities of Memphis and Jackson were also major selling points.

"The big winners will obviously be West Tennessee, Jackson, and Memphis," Rolfe said. "Part of the conversations and part of the data points needed for this particular project were access to air service, great healthcare, entertainment, and education. The great news is when it comes to those great attributes Memphis and Jackson check all those boxes."

See ROLFE on Page 3



Mayors from Tennessee's largest cities advocate for restoring revenue sharing relationship between local governments and the state. L-R: Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly, Metro Nashville Mayor John Cooper, Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon and Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland.

the sharing relationship, municipalities only receive a share of the state sales tax generated by 5.5% of the state sales tax rate rather than the full 7%.

At the same time in 2002, the state also doubled from \$1,600 to \$3,200 the amount of the purchase price any single item that is subject to a combined state and local option sales tax of 9.75%.

In addition to the single article cap increase, the state also captured and continues to capture 100% of the state's 7% levy as well as the 2.75% portion of the sales tax levy that is customarily reserved for local government on the added sale of items with a purchase price above \$1,600. The changes made in 2002 solely benefited the state budget at the expense of local taxpayers.

In the 20 years since, nearly \$2 billion in additional sales tax collections have been realized by the state as a result of these changes - \$2 billion that would have benefited local taxpayers had the historical relationship not been altered. The 2002 changes also prevented cities from benefiting from the increase in the single-item sales tax cap for items priced above

As sales tax revenues continue to grow and show strength, the return to the previous SSST sharing relationship between the state and its cities would provide relief to local taxpayers and assist local governments in meeting the increasing demand for services, provide an environment that has enabled existing businesses and industries to succeed, promote further economic expansion, and afford residents a high quality of life that has allowed the state of Tennessee to prosper.

If you haven't already, make plans to meet with your legislators and discuss these bills. Join other municipalities in passing resolutions in support of these key initiatives and share them with your delegation.

To learn more about these two initiatives, go to www.TML1.org

Register for TML 2022 **Legislative Conference**

Join us in Nashville for the TML Legislative Conference, slated for March 14-15 at the DoubleTree by Hilton.

The Legislative Conference is a great opportunity to connect with your fellow municipal officials; hear from our state leaders on key legislation and public policy matters affecting your municipality; and to meet with your Senator and Representative on Capitol Hill to discuss your community needs.

Registration opens Monday morning, March 14 at 8:30 a.m. with a meet-and-greet coffee break with TML's sponsored programs – Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, Public Entity Partners, and the various TML Partnered Programs.

Lunch will begin at noon.

The conference agenda will run from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with a host of speakers from our state leadership. Attendees are encouraged to attend the House and Senate floor sessions that evening at the Capitol.

Tuesday's agenda will begin with an early breakfast and more presentations before adjourning to attend committee meetings at Cordell Hull.

A more detailed agenda will be shared at a later date.

To register, go to https:// www.cognitoforms.com/TM-L1/ 2022tmllegislativeconference. For more information contact sharris@TML1.org.

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



CHATTANOOGA

Chattanooga EPB has been recognized by Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI) as one of the nation's first utilities to achieve Gold Performance Excellence in Electricity Renewal (PEER) status. EPB estimates its smart electric grid saved more than \$2.6 million in energy savings last year while cutting about 3,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions. EPB has been working with Volkswagen of American to boost the automaker's environmental rating as well as achieve LEED status for its new research and testing facility in Chattanooga.

CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville has the most desirable ZIP code in the country, according to a recent study conducted by real estate company Open Door. The 37042 zip code in Clarksville ranked above Austin, Atlanta, San Diego, and Orlando as the top relocation destination in the country last year. Officials with the company said the city's location, costs, and amenities have made it an ideal destination for those moving into Middle Tennessee. Massive job growth seen in and around Nashville combined with Clarksville's local community and housing affordability all drove up the city's appeal. Other factors like parks and open spaces, school districts, and a small town feel were among the reasons movers chose Clarksville.

CLINTON

3M Company officials announced they will invest approximately \$470 million and create 600 new jobs by 2025 by expanding their manufacturing operations in Clinton. 3M's expansion at the Eagle Bend Industrial Park will include two of its fast-growing product lines. The additional and jobs will help 3M increase capacity and reduce manufacturing cycle time to be more responsive to growing consumer demand. In addition, the investment will improve sustainability by replacing plastic packaging with more renewable packaging such as paperboard. 3M is a proud community partner, supporting local activities with Junior Achievement, Habitat for Humanity, as well as partnering with the Anderson County Chamber of Commerce to provide supplies to schools and nonprofit organizations throughout the county.

COLUMBIA

Fiberon officials announced the company will establish new manufacturing and distribution operations in Columbia. Fiberon, a subsidiary of Fortune Brands Home & Security, Inc., will create 310 new jobs over the next five years. Founded in North Carolina in 1997, Fiberon is a leading U.S. manufacturer of wood-alternative decking, railing and cladding, and prides itself on serving customers with high-quality, eco-friendly products. Today, the company employs more than 600 people across the U.S. through its bicoastal manufacturing and distribution operations in New London, North Carolina and Meridian, Idaho.

DAYTON

The city of Dayton, in partnership with the Southeast Development District and Rhea Economic Tourism Council, has been awarded a \$1 million TDOT Multimodal Access Grant for a multimodal access pathway to connect Highway 30 and Bryan College with downtown Dayton and the Rhea County Courthouse. The project will include the busiest intersection in Dayton and will permit easier access for pedestrians and cyclists. They will also be able to cross Richland Creek via a new pedestrian bridge that also connects them to the Dayton Boat Dock at Point Park. The Dayton City Council approved a \$50,000 matching funds for the project.

DICKSON

Monogram Assembled Foods, LLC officials announced the company has established new operations in Dickson and will create nearly 400 new jobs. The deal indicates a \$53.5 million investment in Dickson. Monogram Foods purchased a building formerly owned by Conagra, which announced in early 2020 its plans to close the facility. As part of Monogram Foods' acquisition, the facility never closed, and the company offered employment to Conagra's existing employees so that no jobs were lost during the transition. Monogram

Foods' Dickson operations will operate similarly to its other 10 U.S. manufacturing facilities, which offer a full range of meat snacks, appetizers, assembled sandwiches, fully cooked and raw bacon, corn dogs, USDA baked goods and other convenience products. Founded in 2004, Monogram Foods is a privately held, Memphis-based manufacturer and marketer of packaged and value-added foods. Today, the company has more than 3,000 employees and operates 11 manufacturing facilities in seven states.

FRANKLIN

PennyMac Financial Services, Inc., will invest \$3.9 million to open a new location in Franklin, creating 325 new jobs. Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., PennyMac expanded its West Coast operations to Tennessee by establishing a new mortgage origination center in Franklin. The Franklin facility is essential to PennyMac's consumer direct lending business, which relies on its dedicated staff to actively acquire and interact with customers across the country. Founded in 2008, the corporation currently assists more than 2 million customers nationwide and has more than 7,000 employees across 16 locations. In 2021, Pennymac ranked fourth in Fortune's 100 Fastest-Growing Companies in the world. The organization is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to attracting, developing and engaging a diverse workforce that empowers the communities where it lives and serves.

GREENEVILLE

Parkway Products, LLC, announced the company will invest \$5.7 million and create 160 new jobs in the next five years to expand its existing operations in Greeneville. The injection molding company plans to add several lines and will use funds to purchase and install new assets, tooling costs, and space. With 10 facilities in the U.S. and Mexico, Parkway has been North America's premier injection molder since its founding in 1946. The company is a leader in six niche injection mold processes and has an extensive history and expertise in the aerospace and electronics, agriculture, off-road truck, automotive, healthcare, industrial and infrastructure markets.

LA VERGNE

The city of La Vergne is celebrating 50 years since its incorporation this year with a series of events marking the historic occasion. City officials kicked off the celebrations with a reception at city hall to celebrate the incorporation anniversary on Feb. 1, 1972. The city had previously been incorporated from 1860 to 1881, but population losses following the Civil War saw the city lose its charter for several decades. Since its reincorporation in the 1970s, La Vergne has seen its population grow from 2,800 to more than 41,500. During the celebration, State Rep. Mike Sparks presented a proclamation signed by the Rutherford County state delegation and a plaque signed by Gov. Bill Lee congratulating the city on its milestone. Upcoming events scheduled as part of the yearlong festivities include a special issue anniversary coin, a community picnic, a block party, the opening of a time capsule, a community dance, a fun run, and the publication of a cookbook with recipes collected from the local community.

LEBANON

REI Co-op officials announced the specialty outdoor retailer will establish a new distribution center in Lebanon, creating more than 280 new jobs. REI, the nation's largest consumer co-op, will create it's fourth distribution center in the country, is expected to open fall 2023. Once complete, it will serve more than 70 REI stores on the East Coast and in the Midwest and South. Situated on 41 acres, the 400,000-squarefoot, state-of-the-art facility will be one mile from I-40 and three miles from downtown Lebanon at 1400 Murfreesboro Road. It is being constructed with industry-leading sustainability and technology features. The design is centered on a productive and healthy build environment that intentionally takes into consideration how employees work, rest, and connect to nature.

MCMINNVILLE

The Tennessee Military Department

Dresden receives tractor donation to aid in tornado recovery efforts



The city of Dresden has received the donation of a brand new tractor to aid in cleanup efforts following deadly tornados that struck the area in December. Korean-based firm TYM Tractors - who has an American headquarters in Nashville – donated the tractor, which was delivered to the city by Dresden native Tony Lay, a highly popular YouTuber who hosts "Tony's Tractor Adventure." Dresden Mayor Jeff Washburn said the tractor will not only aid in cleanup following the storms but help improve Dresden

Smyrna, Nissan officials cut ribbon on new gate at town's pocket park



Officials with the town of Smyrna, Smyrna Parks and Recreation Department, and Nissan recently cut the ribbon on the Industry Gate in the city's new Zama Park. The pocket park is a tribute to the relationship between Zama City in Japan and Smyrna. For more than 30 years, the two communities have taken part in an educational, social, cultural, and business exchange as a result of their respective relationships with Nissan. The park features three gates that symbolize the three commonalities between Smyrna and Zama City: agriculture, hospitality, and industry.

Knoxville officials break ground on affordable housing development



Officials with the city of Knoxville broke ground on 80 units of affordable rental housing being built by Partners Construction and Southeast Capitol LLC as part of a \$2 million investment from the city's Affordable Rental Development Fund. Through the program, the new housing on Asheville Highway will be constructed and rents will be kept affordable for low-income residents for at least 30 years.

has broken ground on a new National Guard readiness center along Manchester Highway in McMinnville. The new facility replaces the Mc-Minnville National Guard Armory that has been the home of the Manchester-based unit for more than 60 vears. Originally built in 1957, the 11,200-square-foot armory is presently the oldest and smallest armory in the Tennessee National guard. The new facility will be 33,000 square feet and provide modern administrative, training, supply, and storage rooms with energy-efficient equipment and other green features to reduce operating costs. It also provides adequate parking for soldiers, visitors, and the unit's tactical equipment. The readiness center will also have a 5,600-square-foot vehicle maintenance building.

NASHVILLE

Swedish furniture company IKEA has announced it will pilot its first U.S. pick-up location in Nashville. Customers can shop products online and then pick them up at a location in the Nashville area. The company said the pilot program is part of efforts to meet customers "wherever they are and however they like to shop." The company had previously planned to

open a new store in the Antioch area of Nashville, but ultimately decided against it due to changing business models. The company already has pick-up locations in Canada.

NASHVILLE

Nashville Mayor John Cooper recently announced that Metro Nashville was selected to receive a \$3.65 million federal grant to support the development of a smart-technology hub for traffic management. The newly-created Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure (NDOT) will utilize this center and associated advanced traffic signal control systems, sensor-based traffic monitoring technologies, and other tools to monitor and better manage congestion. The center will be a clearinghouse for traffic-flow updates, which NDOT will share in real time on roadway signs, social media, and online. The project will be funded by the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, which is administered by TDOT in Tennessee to support surface transportation projects and other related efforts that contribute to air quality improvement and congestion relief. Since adopting its Metro Transportation Plan in 2020, Metro Nashville has

secured eight grant and partnership awards totaling nearly \$44 million to advance its outlined goals.

SHELBYVILLE

Vanderbilt University, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Nashville Electric Service (NES), Duck River Electric Membership Corporation (DREMC), and Silicon Ranch Corporation broke ground on a new solar farm that is now under construction in Shelbyville. The 35-megawatt (MWAC) Vanderbilt I Solar Farm is expected to begin producing power before the end of 2022, bringing new renewable generation to the Tennessee Valley. Originally announced in January 2020, the partnership was the first of its kind under TVA's nationally recognized Green Invest Program.. Nashville-based Silicon Ranch is funding the project and plans to hire more than 250 craft workers, the majority of whom will be recruited from the Bedford County area and the military veteran community, to install the facility. Silicon Ranch will also own, operate, and maintain the Vanderbilt I Solar Farm, a disciplined approach the company takes with every project it develops.

State officials host first Blue Oval City Community Impact Meeting

By KATE COILTML Communications Specialist

Meeting regional water and wastewater needs, particularly through use of federal ARPA funds, was the topic of discussion for the first Blue Oval City Community Impact meeting hosted by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD).

Officials with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) presented information on how municipalities can best begin to prepare their water and wastewater infrastructure for the growth anticipated as a result of the Blue Oval City development. Tennessee Commissioner of Environment and Conservation David Salyers said the project presents a major opportunity.

"This is such an exciting time for our state and especially for West Tennessee," he said. "I feel like that dog who was chasing the car all along trying to land that big project at the megasite. Now, we've caught that car, and it happens to be an electric Ford F-150 Lightning. I think we are going to have a lot of challenges going forward, but I know the mayors out there and how well they work together. We are going to get this done."

Brooxie Carlton, assistant commissioner of community and rural development with TNECD, noted that officials throughout West Tennessee have been eager for information and to get started on their own planning and development necessary to build the framework for Blue Oval City.

"Nobody thought about what happens when we land something at the megasite," Carlton said. "We were so focused on landing something at the megasite that we didn't focus on what happens after that. We were behind the curve, I would say. It has taken us a minute to get caught up, but my vision for these meetings is to get everyone on the same page, make sure they're up-to-speed, feel comfortable knowing what is going on at Blue Oval City and around Blue Oval City, and make sure they have the resources that they need to deal with how this is going to impact their communities."

Cartlon said the second major topic of conversation she has seen regarding the development is about what water and wastewater infrastructure needs should be met. As a result, TDEC was asked to talk on the topic for the first meeting.

Greg Young, deputy commissioner for TDEC's Bureau of Environment, said planning ahead will help find the best funds for necessary projects.

"People are going to want to jump directly to is building something," Young said. "You can't do that. What you really need to do is plan first. ECD is pushing folks to do comprehensive planning first. Bring on some folks at your level or



Gov. Bill Lee speaks at the Blue Oval City announcement held in Stanton. Various state departments are working hand-in-hand with West Tennessee municipalities to anticipate growth and needs coming from Ford and SK Innovation's historic economic investment in the state.

the state level to do comprehensive land-use planning and within that overarching framework of land-use planning do water and wastewater planning. Get the framework down and then plug in that water/wastewater component to that. Through that, we believe that comprehensive planning and water/wastewater planning provides a more holistic, robust identification of those needs that will lead to more meaningful and impactful spends of those ARP dollars."

Carlton said while there is pressure to move ahead with ARPA funding, planning is essential to making sure projects go smoothly. ECD has money available to help with this process and ARPA funds can also be used for planning.

"Even if it is just starting with the TDEC Infrastructure Scorecard, we need to take a minute to do planning," she said. "ECD has some planning funds to help communities impacted by Blue Oval City. Part of that will be water and sewer, part will be housing. We are putting out an RFP in the next few weeks for someone to provide those planning services to you guys through ECD. If we don't take time to plan this out then 10 years from now you are going to be in the same situation with the same amount of infiltration and water loss, or we are going to have something built out and have regrets about how things

To help understand current status, condition, financial health, and physical health of infrastructure, Young recommended officials use the new Tennessee Infrastructure Scorecard. Vena Jones, environmental consultant with TDEC, said the scorecard is accessed through the ARPA site, the TDEC Revolving Fund website, and through the Tennessee Association of Utility Districts (TAUD) site.

Jones said all eligible projects being submitted to TDEC will need information from the scorecard, which was created in partnership between TAUD and TDEC. TAUD will be presenting workshops in February on completing the scorecard.

"It is a self-assessment for water infrastructure needs," Jones said. "One of the critical needs identified is an asset-management plan. A capital improvement plan is included in that overall asset management plan. All systems that apply have to have a summary so we know you've identified your most critical needs and you have a proposal that is at least in part addressing them."

Young said looking at the bigger picture may also help identify what funds are best used where.

"Something we have encouraged folks to do is to consider the bigger picture, the long-range plan," he said. "Consider how ARP dollars that are coming down the pipeline quickly play into a bigger framework and can work with funds from CDBG, USDA Rural Development, SRF, and others. We have additional opportunities that may be coming down the pipe. As we are talking about water and wastewater infrastructure, we encourage folks to play the longgame and take the long view."

Karen Simo, chief of staff for TDEC, said ARPA funds are a great opportunity for addressing the needs, but are not a "silver bullet."

"As we are crafting ARPA and trying to strategically think about as a state how we can use it and how we can help local communities use it, we are also trying to put it in the context of all the other funding that is out there," Simo said. "There is more money coming down from the feds after ARPA that is going to come through our SRF (State Revolving Fund) program. We realize each of these versions of funds had a different color and different requirements, which can be very difficult and challenging. We are also trying to push each fund toward its best use in light of what we know is available elsewhere."

Young said gathering information on the front end will help communities move forward with projects and that TDEC has a website dedicated to helping with ARPA projects and guidelines as well as a disbursement plan for funds.

"We are collecting a lot of information," he said. "We want you all to have a place that is a one-stop-shop from a TDEC aspect on what is going on and where you need to plug in. This website not only has a current of information you can use but opportunities to ask questions. We want to be able to respond to questions. The most efficient way – bar none – is to sign up on our email list. We have someone monitoring that 24/7."

Starting with smaller projects will lay the groundwork for bigger future development.

"Inflow and infiltration and water loss are significant problems," Young said. "The bang for the buck you can get by addressing those problems can be huge. Look for opportunities to develop projects around those problems first and then look to developing the brand-new shiny infrastructure. We need to take care of what we have first to maximize its functionality before we start doing new stuff. You may not need the fancy car when what is really needed is just some basic improvements. There is basic, short-term stuff that can be done on a different time frame than some of the long-term stuff."

Collaboration will also be key to making sure infrastructure needs are met in the area.

"Communicate, coordinate, and collaborate," Young said. "Develop regional ideas and approaches. Look for this regional-type, bigger and longer-term opportunities. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. There are regional projects inside and outside of Tennessee that can serve as examples for some of your opportunities. Look

Important Links

For more information on the \$1.35 billion of Tennessee's Fiscal Recovery Funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) set aside for non-competitive grants to communities for eligible infrastructure projects as part of the Tennessee Water Infrastructure Investment Program, visit this link.

To sign up to receive email updates regarding TDEC's ARP Water Infrastructure Investment Plan, visit this link.

To view the new Tennessee Infrastructure Scorecard, visit this link.

Email John Greer at TAUD (johngreer@taud.org) for information on the upcoming Scorecard Workshops.

For more information on Tennessee Rural Development, visit this link.

at your existing legal options and frameworks. You may need to carry some legislation, and we can work with that."

Regional collaboration can also help with obstacles these projects may encounter and may provide win-win situations for all those involved.

"There may be discharge limits into the Hatchie," he said. "We need to see what the problems, limitations, and hurdles are at the outset so we can find ways to jump those hurdles. That is where the regional opportunities really help us. One we have seen already and want to be careful about in West Tennessee is some of the soils in West Tennessee are not optimal for septic or decentralized wastewater treatment systems. Don't assume a quick fix can be used for these."

Carlton said two further Blue Oval City Community Impact Meetings have been scheduled, a virtual meeting on Feb. 9 and an in-person meeting on Feb. 23 to be held in-person at a location in West Tennessee to be determined. Topics of upcoming community meetings will include more on water and sewer, housing, land use, roads and transportation, workforce development, and how keep existing industries happy while meeting the needs of the Blue Oval development.

TNECD will also launch a new website within the next two weeks dedicated to developments and resources with for Oval City that will be accessible through their website

Rolfe gives behind-the-scenes look at how state landed Blue Oval

ROLFE from Page 1

Then in August, Rolfe and Gov. Bill Lee received a phone call from Bill Ford Jr., the executive chairman of the Ford Motor Company and great-grandson of company founder and auto industry pioneer Henry Ford.

"Seven months later, we were informed that the state of Tennessee had been identified as the winner of the Ford's largest project ever. For the state of Tennessee - from a capital investment perspective – this was the largest investment at \$5.6 billion. Bill Ford said that Tennessee was head and shoulders above the other states that competed for this project," Rolfe said. "That is obviously a great attestation and affirmation that we delivered not only the answers they were looking for, but we also delivered the economic incentives to offset the cost. I'm not only talking about the incentives that were delivered to Ford Motor Company but the incentives that were delivered on infrastructure because this is a state-owned industrial park."

A matter of weeks after the announcement, the Tennessee General Assembly came together to help put together the final piece of the Blue Oval puzzle: \$844 million in incentives for the project.

"At the end of the day, it also takes a great General Assembly that is very supportive of these kind of capital investments," Rolfe said. "This is an enormous commitment from our state's perspective. The



Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee, left, with Ford Motor Company Executive Chairman Bill Ford Jr., right, at the Blue Oval City announcement in Stanton.

funding mechanism comes through the General Assembly, which we have a great working relationship with. The leadership of Gov. Bill Lee is very much a part of this success."

One advantage Tennessee has as the Blue Oval City project develops is experience with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) in the automotive industry.

"When you look at the au-

tomotive ecosystem across Tennessee, we have three OEMS: the Volkswagen plant, the GM/Saturn plant, and Nissan," Rolfe said. "Now we are going to have a fourth plant that we are excited about. At the same time, that earlier automotive ecosystem has led to about 1,000 automotive companies to call Tennessee home. If you are one of the great Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III suppliers, you now have to

be a part of this great shift from the internal combustion engine to the electric vehicle."

Already, Rolfe said the state is gaining traction from other companies that work with Ford as

suppliers.

"We are continuing to work hard to recruit these suppliers," he said. "If you look at Volkswagen as a model, when they came to Tennessee they bought an enormous

amount of real estate that wraps around the OEM. Volkswagen handpicked their Tier I suppliers to be with them on that campus. Ford has the same concept. Not only are the OEM and the battery going to be on this campus, but there should also be room for 10 to 12 Tier I suppliers that Ford and SK will handpick."

Rolfe said West Tennessee will be reaping the rewards from what is a once-in-a-generation investment

"This is going to be a project that is transformational for decades," Rolfe said. "You look at what happened to Spring Hill more than 30 years ago when GM/Saturn came in. They went from a population of 4,000 then to a population of 40,000 today. We hope that same kind of opportunity presents itself over in rural West Tennessee."

The most important transformation coming out of Blue Oval City may not come from the vehicles rolling off the line but what the development will mean for Tennessee families.

"At the end of the day, this is going to be about great family wages," Rolfe said. "These are the kinds of family wages that provide a higher quality of life. They give a family an income that may allow a larger home, an extra car in the garage, and an extra vacation. The quality of these jobs is something we are very excited about because that kind of prosperity in our rural areas of the state doesn't show up and present itself every day."

Transit projects in a dozen cities part of governor's budget proposals

A dozen cities will benefit from more than \$600 million worth of transportation investments outlined as part of Gov. Bill Lee's FY22-23 Budget proposals.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) would be able to fund a list of 22 projects planned across the state.

"We have an obligation to future generations to invest in our roads and bridges and propel economic growth," said Gov. Lee. "Tennessee's strong fiscal position allows us to make strategic investments in infrastructure and ensure progress on critical projects across the state."

TDOT stands to gain \$626.5 million that will go toward accelerating IMPROVE Act projects, interchange improvements in rural areas, and road infrastructure projects in our fastest-growing counties, to name a few.

- \$77 million for Economic Development Projects
- \$226 million for State Highway Partnership Program
- \$176 million for the Rural Interchange Improvement Program
- \$100 million for IMPROVE Act Acceleration
- \$4 million for Enhanced Litter
 Removal
- \$3.5 million for Transportation Equity Fund

"Tennessee is one of only five states with no transportation debt," said TDOT Commissioner Joe Galbato. "We are excited and grateful for the additional funding that will no doubt keep us in good financial health and accommodate the ever-growing needs of our citizens."

Two of the 22 proposed projects under the governor's budget would offer transportation improvements in the town of Farragut: a \$48 million improvement

project to the Interstate 40-75 Interchange at Campbell Station Road and \$35 million for improvements to the I-40/75 Interchange at Watt Road

Farragut Mayor Ron Williams said the two projects would be of great benefit not only to Farragut but to the surrounding communities and East Tennessee in general.

"On behalf of the Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen, I'd like to thank Governor Bill Lee and his staff, along with our hard-working legislators—Jason Zachary, Richard Briggs, Becky Duncan Massey and Justin Lafferty-for proposing funding for improvements to the Campbell Station Road/I-40/I-75 interchange," Williams said. "This redesigned interchange would be beneficial for all of East Tennessee and would significantly ease congestion in both Farragut and Hardin Valley. Upgrades to this critical interchange have been discussed for two decades, and our board has pushed hard to make it happen, so we are incredibly thankful that Governor Lee has proposed this important infrastructure investment for our community."

The budget calls for three transportation projects centered around economic development. In Maryville and Alcoa, the budget includes \$15 million for the widening of State Route 334 at Louisville Loop and Proffitt Springs Road. A second \$40 million project would improve the Cleveland Street Extension and I-24 Underpass in Nashville, and a third \$22 million project would realign Meadow Park Lane to Riverport Road in Kingsport near an Eastman Chemical Company.

The two Farragut projects would be part of the seven projects outlined under the State Highway Partnership Program Projects. The proposed projects for this program also include a \$39 mil-

"I went to Waverly after the



One of the projects proposed as part of Gov. Bill Lee's transportation budget is a \$48 million improvement project to the Interstate 40-75 Interchange at Campbell Station Road in Farragut. Of the 22 projects proposed in the budget, at least 12 are within city limits.

lion extension of State Route 449/ Veterans Boulevard in Sevierville, a \$28 million project at the I-40 Interchange at McCrory Lane in Nashville, a new I-24 Interchange at Buchanan Road in Rutherford County, a \$86 million project on State Route 386 between State Route 109 in Gallatin and State Route 174 in Hendersonville, and \$16 million for the second phase of the I-40 Interchange at Christmasville Road in Jackson.

Proposals for the Rural Interchange Improvement Program would include two projects on I-24, two on I-26, and eight projects on I-40. The I-26 projects include

TENNESSEE FY23 PROPOSED BUDGET: \$52.6B

Where Each Tax Dollar Goes

two \$5.5 million projects to add high mast lighting, one at State Route 173 in Unicoi County and the second at State Route 359 in Johnson City. The I-24 proposals include \$11 million for ramp improvements and lighting at State Route 50 in Grundy County and \$16.5 million for ramp improvements, widening, and lighting at State Route 15 in Monteagle.

There are four \$22 million proposed projects along I-40 aimed at reconstruction of the interchange, widening, and improved lighting: one at State Route 50 in Hickman County, at State Route 56 in Putnam County, at State Route 73 in

New Allocations - \$8.085B

K-12 EDUCATION & CTE - 13% - \$1B

HIGHER EDUCATION & CTE -

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES -

LAW & SAFETY - 7% - \$602M

RAINY DAY FUND & DEBT &

LIABILITY REDUCTIONS -

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS -

OTHER - 10% - \$795M

Cocke County, and at State Route 104 in Henderson County. Additionally, three \$11 million projects along I-40 would reconstruct interchanges, widen routes, and add lighting to State Route 13 in Humphreys County, and State Route 1 in Haywood County. Another \$16.5 million project along I-40 calls for ramp improvements, widening, and lighting on State Route 48 in Dickson and Hickman Counties.

For more information on the proposal, visit https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/community-relations/FY23%20Transportation%20Projects%20with%20 Counties.pdf

Gov. Lee rolls out budget priorities in State of State Address

EDUCATION - 41¢

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES - 24¢

LAW, SAFETY, &

GENERAL GOVERNMENT - 8¢

RESOURCES & REGULATION - 4¢

TRANSPORTATION - 70

CITIES & COUNTIES - 5¢

BUDGET from Page 1

Although short on details, the governor made his case for overhauling the state's BEP funding formula for K-12 education, stating it was an outdated system with very little transparency.

"I didn't know a lot about public school funding at the time when I walked in the door, but I know that a 30-year formula that nobody likes probably ought to be redone," Lee said.

He urged lawmakers to pass his proposed overhaul of the state's \$5.6 billion school funding formula along with \$1 billion more to pay for it.

'I'm proposing an innovative approach that sets aside dollars for each student, based on their individual needs, and these dollars will be used in whatever public school they attend," he said.

Other investments in K-12 education include:

- \$2.5M to expand the Future Workforce Initiative
- \$124.7M to provide an increase into the teacher salary pool
 \$16M recurring and \$16M nonrecurring to the Charter Schools Facility Fund to increase the num-
- \$550 million into one-time career and technical education grants,
 \$200 million to relocate 11 schools across the state which are located in flood plains.

ber of Charter Schools

devastating floods late last year," he said. "The tragedy, the heartache, the loss was hard to take in. I walked into the elementary school where the water rose to four feet in 10 minutes. I saw desks and backpacks and books piled up against the door where water rushed out. If the Waverly flood happened on Friday instead of Saturday, we would be mourning the loss of hundreds of Tennessee children. I am proposing one-time funding to ensure that no student in Tennessee attends a public school located in a flood zone."

In addition to the K-12 education funding priorities, here are other recommendations Gov. Lee is proposing for the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget:

Higher Education & Career Technical Education: \$1.98 B

- \$200 million for TCAT infrastructure investments to help double the skilled workforce by 2026
- \$72 million to complete the Oak Ridge Innovation Institute, a partnership with the University of Tennessee to invest in data science and technology, advanced materials, and outcomes-based applications
- \$75.2 million to increase the 4-year HOPE Award to \$5,100 per student, per year, and the 2-year HOPE Award to \$3,200 per student, per year

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - 2¢ Transportation and Infrastruc-

ture: \$627 million.
\$623 million for road infrastructure to accelerates projects listed in the IMPROVE Act and invests in transportation projects to ensure economic opportunity

Law and Safety: \$601.6 million

- Adding 100 Highway Patrol Troopers, 20 Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Agents, and 25 Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Forensic Science Personnel
- Directing the Department of Safety and Homeland Security to create a plan so every house of worship in Tennessee can receive high-quality safety training
- \$355.6millioninaMulti-Agen-

cy Law Enforcement Training Academy

\$28.4 million to fully fund the Correctional Officer salary changes
\$66 million for the TN Law

Enforcement Hiring, Training, and Recruitment program

• \$179 million to complete full construction of Tennessee Advanced Communications Network coverage, ensuring full mobile connectivity across all Tennessee

for emergency communications and law enforcement
• \$150 million to create the Violent Crime Intervention Grant

Fund **Rural Tennessee**

• \$82 million to reimburse public hospitals for uncompensated

care, primarily in rural communi-

- \$26 million for Rural Opportunity Grants, helping to get communities ready for corporate investment
- \$55 million to increase access to services across each of the Medicaid Pathways to Independence programs
- Rainy Day Fund, Debt & Liability reduction: \$922 million.

The full speech can be found on the Governor's website. A budget overview can be found here: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/governorsoffice-documents/governorsoffice-documents/Gov-Lee_FY23_Budget_OnePager.pdf



Public, private partnership turns old Cleveland mill into new housing

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

A renovation project at a former mill property in Cleveland is set to breathe new life back into both the historic property and the city's downtown.

The mill, located on Edwards Street in Cleveland, dates back to 1924 when construction started on the building, according to the Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce. Two years later, the building was opened under the Cherokee Hosiery Mill Brand. It was one of several mills that were part of the major textile and hosiery production industry in the town during the late 1800s and first half of the 1900s.

Expanding several times over the years, the mill was sold and renamed the Sanda Hosiery Mill in 1945. The company took over a former grocery store and other buildings as part of its expanding operations between the 1940s and 1960s. During its heyday, the mill was most notable for producing a line of top-quality children's hosiery known as the "Famous Baby Bootie Sock."

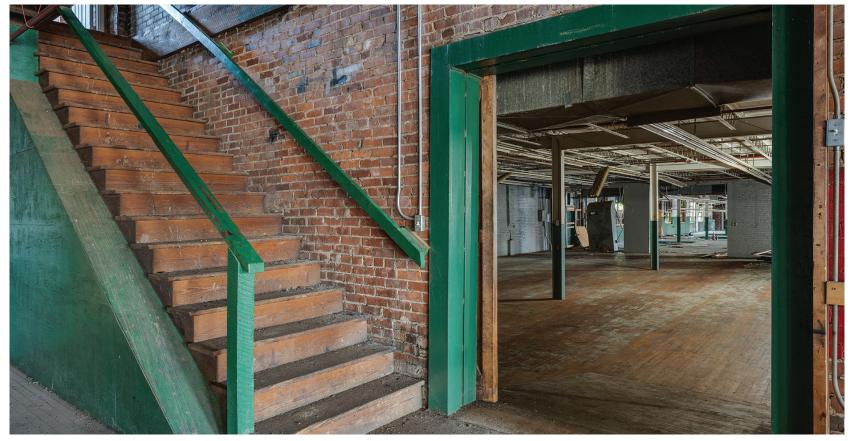
Once a major local employer, the mill closed in 2002 and was used for a period to house the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity and then a construction company. It's story may have ended there if not for a public-private partnership between the city of Cleveland and the Knoxville-based Lewis Group Architects to revitalize the former mill into downtown housing.

Douglas Caywood, an architect with the Lewis Group, has worked closely on the revitalization project over the past decade, including the master planning of the site, the attainment of its National Register of Historic Places status, and applications for historic-based tax credits. He said the redevelopment of the former mill was an ideal project.

"Downtowns grow with a balance of live, work, and play," he said. "Downtown residents extend downtown vitality from the eightto-five workday to fostering more activity in the evenings for shopping, dining, and events."

Cleveland Mayor Kevin Brooks said the project is a great example of how government and private business can work together for the benefit of both.

"The mill had been closed, vacant and unused for decades. This is a fantastic repurposing of a significant structure in our historic downtown," Brooks said. "The Cleveland City Council funded a Downtown Revitalization Plan in 2017. When elected in 2018, we whole-heartedly adopted this plan to reinvigorate our downtown. The Sanda Project is a public-private partnership, which we believe are critical to any project. Private owners and private investors had the vision and the city partnered with grants, infrastructure and improving the roads and intersections."



Officially opened in 1926, the former Sanda Hosiery Mill in Cleveland is being renovated into a series of loft apartments. The project not only preserves an important piece of Cleveland's past and a local landmark. It also provides new opportunities for the community.

The Lewis Group plans to turn the more than 59,600-square-foot mill space into 52 loft apartments with both one and two-bedroom options. This will nearly double the amount of apartments in downtown Cleveland from 59 to 111 units.

The Lewis Group also assisted both the original and current owners with the process of putting the property on the national historic register, thereby making the property eligible for historic tax credits and other preservation grants. Caywood said this work allowed the project to receive \$300,000 out of \$4 million granted for historic development projects across the state.

According to the Lewis Group, the historic nature of the building led itself to the redevelopment

"After all of the sewing machines and equipment were removed, the historic structure retained beautiful hardwood floors, exposed steel and wood structure, exposed brick and clay tiles, and large steel windows: a perfect palette for loft living," the group said on its website. "The open mill space will be divided into 52 loft apartments with a central corridor. Residents will enjoy large re-glazed windows, exposed brick and structure, refinished hardwood flooring on the second and third levels, and polished concrete floors on the first level. The history of the building will be highlighted with the display of a large historic boiler door, a conveyor, and the original freight elevator apparatus."

In addition to the unique historic character of the building, the project also calls for a main lobby, leasing office, laundry areas, support spaces, roof-mounted solar panels, electric car charging stations, and three redeveloped parking spaces to accommodate

residents

As part of the project, the Lewis Group has also worked with both the city, Mainstreet Cleveland, and local utilities to provide a street-scape improvement project with widening of sidewalks and the addition of parallel parking, street trees, and pedestrian lighting. The group has also assisted the developer in obtaining \$300,000 in historical development grants for the project.

Caywood said the project is already having an influence on other areas of Cleveland.

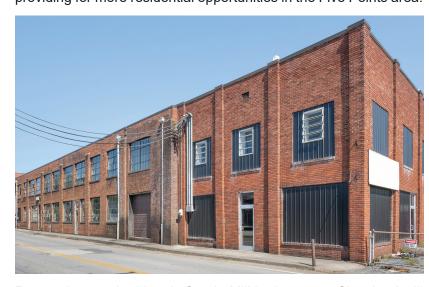
"The Sanda Hosiery Mill property is at the Eastern Gateway to downtown Cleveland," he said. "With the renovation and restoration of the building and the influx of 52 new residents at Five Points, this gateway will again become a vibrant entry to downtown Cleveland. The project has already initiated other improvements and revitalization efforts of other properties along Edwards and Inman Street. The project not only infuses additional residents into the fabric of downtown, but it has initiated streetscape improvements for improved pedestrian use and has initiated the purchase of other historic buildings on the block that are in design and ready to begin renovations."

Mayor Brooks said the loft space will serve as a cornerstone project for other redevelopment and revitalization activity in downtown Cleveland.

"The historic provenance of the Sanda Hosiery Mill qualified the project for additional grants and funding not otherwise available," Mayor Brooks said. "The Sanda Mills project is a key component to the Five Points intersection redevelopment. The downtown housing component as well as large



The project will keep numerous historic features of the building will providing for more residential opportunities in the Five Points area.



Renovations to the historic Sanda Mill in downtown Cleveland will not only serve as a cornerstone for revitalization projects but also double the amount of apartments available downtown.

investment are both key factors invigorating our downtown redevelopment."

At the end of the day, Mayor Brooks said he hopes the project highlights how local governments can play a major role in encouraging economic investment.

"While serving in the Legisla-

ture, Gov Bill Haslam would often say, 'Government does not create jobs, that's what industry and investors do. Governments role is to create the environment for jobs, so industry and investors will come," Brooks said. "That is what we are hopefully doing here in Cleveland."

No loan is too large or too small



The Town of Livingston has used TMBF programs 14 times since 1996. Most recently, the town closed a \$4,558,635 water and sewer refunding bond issue. By refunding the outstanding bonds, the town saved approximately \$538,000 over the term of the bond. Seated left to right: Linda Mooningham, TMBF Marketing Director and Legal Coordinator, Livingston Mayor Curtis Hayes, and Town Clerk Phyllis Looper.



The City of Medina closed on a \$500,000 note issued for street paving. It was the first time the city has used any of the TMBF programs. Seated left to right: City Recorder Kim Gilley and Medina Mayor Vance Coleman. Standing: Tommy Green, TMBF Marketing Representative.



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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

John Allman. technology director for the city of Brentwood, has retired after a 35 year career with the city. Allman began working for



John Allman

the city of Brentwood as a firefighter in 1986, earning two promotions and eventually serving as a captain with Brentwood Fire and Rescue. In 1996, he began overseeing the development of technology systems in the city while simultaneously serving as a fire captain. In 1999, he officially moved from the fire department to become the first technology director for the city of Brentwood, a role he has served in ever since.

Leland Blackwood, Jr, Risk Manager for the City of Maryville has announced his retirement effective January 2022. He has served the



Blackwood

City of Maryville for 20 years. He previously served in Blount County government for 13 years. Recently he was awarded the 2021 Public Entity Partners Excellence in Risk Management Award for East Tennessee. This award was the first award for Risk Management and the City of Maryville in the 40 years of partnership with Public Entity Partners.

Capt. Justin Bush has been named captain of patrol for the Bristol Police Department. An 11year veteran of the department, Bush



Cpt. Justin Bush

served first as a patrol officer and field training officer until he was transferred to the department's Criminal Investigations Unit. As a detective, he oversaw general investigations, child abuse cases, background investigations, and internal investigations. He is currently enrolled in Northwest University's School of Police Staff & Command. Bush holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from East Tennessee State University.

Matt Cousins has been promoted to the rank of lieutenant with the Bristol Police Department. Cousins is a veteran of

the Maryland



Lt. Matt Cousins

Army National Guard, the Tennessee Army National Guard, and the U.S. Army. He holds an associate's degree in Criminal Justice from Maryland's Frederick Community College and a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from King University. Lt. Cousins began his law enforcement career in 1999 with the Kingsport Police Department and was named Director of the Second Judicial District Drug Taskforce in 2007. He joined the BTPD two years later and has served the department as a senior police officer, K9 handler, SWAT team leader, field training officer, critical incident stress debriefer, child safety seat technician, and firearms instructor.

Don Darden, longtime management consultant for the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service, died at



Don Darden

the age of 78. Darden served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, earning the Joint Service Commendation Medal. He earned a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University and a master's of public administration from the University of Tennessee. During his career, he served as the first executive director and organizer of the South Central Tennessee Development District. He also wrote the charter forming the South Central Agency and served as its chairman. Additionally, Darden served as county executive of Coffee County, city manager of Jefferson City, and city administrator for La-Follette before joining MTAS, where

he worked alongside his twin brother Ron. Darden retired from MTAS in 2010 and received the highest award given by the UT's Institute of Public Service for his work.

Micah Doty has been promoted to the rank of lieutenant with the Bristol Police Department. Doty is a graduate of the Walters State



Lt. Micah Doty

Community College Police Academy and holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from East Tennessee State University. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in criminal justice from Bethel University. He began his career in law enforcement as a correctional officer for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department and joined the BTPD in 2014 as a patrol officer. He transferred to the department's Criminal Investigations Division in 2016, serving as a detective in the Street Crimes Unit until he was promoted to Patrol Sergeant in 2019.

Steve Eaton has been hired as the general manager to lead the day-to-day operations of Morristown Landing, a new premium



Steve Eaton

recreation sports and events center spearheaded by the city and Sports Facilities Companies (SFC). Eaton has served in various roles in the hospitality and event management industry including time at the Walt Disney Company and serving as the operations director at Rocky Top Sports World.

Wade Evans has been selected as the new special events supervisor for the Hendersonville Parks and Recreation Department. Evans



Wade Evans

has been with the city for two years, most recently serving as the recreation coordinator for athletics. A lifelong Hendersonville resident, Evans holds a bachelor's degree from Union University and a master's degree from the University of Tennessee at ning manager

Amber Greenwood has been selected as the new director of the Cookeville Gas Department and will take over from retiring and longtime



Amber Greenwood

director Jeff Mills on March 31. A Cookeville native, Greenwood holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's in business administration from Tennessee Tech. She is both a certified public accountant (CPA) and a certified municipal finance officer (CMFO).

Ray Harrington has been appointed interim city manager of Bluff City. Harrington previously served on the Bluff City



Ray Harrington

Board of Mayor and Aldermen for nine years before having to resign because he had moved out of the city limits. Harrington has also previously served as the city's vice mayor.

Brentwood **Police Chief** Jeff Hughes retired on Friday, Feb. 25, 2022, after a 36-year career with the city. The third police chief since



Jeff Hughes

the city's police department was established in 1969, Hughes has been with the department since 1986. Before coming to Brentwood, he served as a 911 dispatcher and officer for the Fairview Police Department before he was hired as a patrol officer by the Brentwood Police Department. He served four years in patrol, ten years as a detective, and then was promoted to lieutenant in 2000. He then served as assistant chief before being selected as police chief in 2012. Hughes is a past President of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police (TACP) and the 2019 recipient of the Joe Casey Award, which is the top law enforcement honor is given annually in recognition of a Chief of Police who has distinguished himself in the TACP through their character, effort, and dedication. In 2015, the Tennessee Municipal League awarded Brentwood with an Excellence in Police Services Award. Hughes holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Middle Tennessee State University.

Jeff Kessee has been promoted to a lieutenant with the Bristol Police Department. Kessee joined BPD in 2011 and has served as the patrol



Lt. Jeff Kessee

supervisor since 2018. He holds an associate's degree in Criminal Justice from Northeast State Technical Community College and is a graduate of the Southwest Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy Jail Basic School and the Walters State Community College Basic Law Enforcement Program. He began his career in law enforcement in 2007 as a jailer and court security officer for the Bristol Virginia Sheriff's Office.

Tyson Morris has been selected as the new chief information officer for the city of Chattanooga. Morris comes to the city from At-



Tyson Morris

lanta where he serves as a high-ranking executive for the Coca-Cola company. Morris has more than 15 years of experience in the IT field and works as the global head of architecture, platforms, and operations for Coca-Cola. Morris holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Auburn University.

Steven S. Mott has been selected as the new transportation planfor the city of Bristol. Mott will be taking over from Rex



Steven S. Mott

Montgomery, who retired in January after a 30-year tenure in the position. Mott has been with the city since 2019. Prior to joining the city, Mott was employed as a customer service coordinator for Siemens Industry in Johnson City. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's in public administration from East Tennessee State University. He is a member of a long list of professional organizations including the American Planning Association, Engaging Local Government Leaders, and International City/County Management Association

Patricia Oldham has been named executive director of the Johnson City Development Authority (JCDA)Board of Directors. A



Patricia Oldham

history of civic and volunteer service in the community and is a native of Johnson City. She spent six years as director of community outreach and economic development for ETSU and has served in numerous roles with Bristol; Bristol, Va.; Jonesborough, Knoxville, and Washington and Unicoi counties. She holds a master's degree in planning for the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in government from The Centre College of Kentucky. She earned credentials from the American Institute of Certified Planners through the American Planning Association and the designation of Tennessee Certified Economic Developer from the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services, Institute for Public Service.

certified planner, Oldham has a long

Jeffrey L. Peach, who serves as the town attorney for Smyrna, re-

Tester celebrates 60 years as Pigeon Forge city manager



Pigeon Forge City Manager Earlene Teaster receives a plaque honoring her 60 years of service from city commissioners (left to right) Dr. Keith Whaley, Tony Watts, Mayor David Wear, Vice Mayor Kevin McClure, and Jay Ogle.

Campbell appointed to state Supreme Court

Sarah K. Campbell has been appointed to the Tennessee Supreme Court by Gov. Bill Lee and confirmed to the position by the Tennessee General Assembly.

Campbell currently serves as the state's associate solicitor general and special assistant to the attorney general. She has represented Tennessee before the state and federal Supreme Courts and the U.S. Courts of Appeals.

She previously worked for Williams and Connolly LLP in Washington, D.C. Campbell earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Tennessee and both a master's degree in public policy and J.D. at Duke University.

She clerked for Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr. of the U.S. Supreme Court and Judge William H. Pryor,



Sarah Campbell

Jr. of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Campbell will take over the seat vacated by late Supreme Court Justice Cornelia "Connie" Clark."

U.S. Rep. Cooper will not seek re-election

U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper has announced he will not seek reelection in 2022.

Cooper has served as the Democratic Congressman representing Tennessee's 4th Congressional District from 1983 to 1995 and its 5th Congressional District since 2003.

Cooper cited the state legislature's controversial move to split Davidson County into three congressional districts as one of the reasons for his decision to not seek reelection. His term in the U.S. Congress will end on Jan. 3, 2023.

Born in Nashville and raised in Shelbyville, Cooper is the son of former Tennessee Gov. Prentice Cooper, grandson of former Shelbyville mayor and Tennessee House Speaker William Prentice Cooper, and brother of Nashville Mayor John Cooper.

He holds a bachelor's degree



U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper

in history and economics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree in philosophy, politics and economics from Oxford University. He received his law degree from Harvard Law School in 1980.

cently graduated from the Tennessee Certified Public Manager Program. This year long certification program is accredited by





the National Certified Manager Program and is offered by the University of Tennessee's Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership. Peach has served as the town attorney for Smyrna since 2008. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Middle Tennessee State University and a law degree from the Nashville School of Law.

Sgt. Anthony "Tony" Rankin with the Brownsville Police Department died Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021, after a twomonth battle



Rankin

with pancreatic cancer and liver failure. He was 57. Rankin began his law enforcement career with BPD in 1989. He spent three years at the Memphis Airport Police before returning to Brownsville in 2007. Rankin served as lead investigator on all sexual assault and child abuse cases as well as served as the department's LIDAR/RADAR instructor and crash reconstructionist. He was also a driving force in the construction of the city's new community justice center.



Tara Skinner

as a realtor for West Central Tennessee for 15 years. She attended both the University of Tennessee at Martin and Lambuth University. Skinner is also a graduate of Jackson Central-Merry Early College High.

Dianne Waldron, town clerk and treasurer for the town of Smyrna, retired after 40 years of service. Waldron began her career with the

ner has served



town as a tax clerk in 1981. Three years later, she was promoted to a supervisory role. During her time with the city, Smyrna has grown from a population of just under 9,000 to one of more than 44,000. She was asked to assume the role of town clerk on an interim basis following the retirement of her predecessor and then given the official appointment to the role in 2001. She was asked to assume the role of town treasurer in 2008. With Waldron's retirement, town paralegal Amber Hobbs has been selected as the city's new town clerk while Jenny Davis, current treasury manager for the town, has been named town treasurer.

STATE **BRIEFS**

The state of Tennessee is due to receive \$302 million for bridge repair from the U.S. Department of Transportation's new Bridge Formula Program. The historic program focuses on rehabilitation, replacement, preservation, protection, and construction for bridges across the nation as part of nationwide infrastructure programs. According to USDOT, Tennessee has 881 bridges in poor condition. The state will receive \$302.1 million over a period of five years for bridge-related projects with \$60.4 million allotted for the first year of the program in fiscal year 2022.

While teen births have declined in the state, Tennessee continues to struggle with low birth-weight in **infants.** The state constantly ranks in the bottom four of states for lowweight births. Children with lowweight birth have a higher risk of dying within the first year of life as well as suffering from developmental issues. Smoking, poor nutrition, poverty, stress, disease, and violence are all contributing factors to low birth weight. While adolescent pregnancy is also associated with negative health outcomes for both mother and child, the state cut its birth rate among 15 to 17 years in half over the past decade.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) would receive more than \$600 million as part of Gov. Bill Lee's FY22-23 Budget proposal. TDOT stands to gain \$626.5 million that will go toward accelerating IM-PROVE Act projects, interchange improvements in rural areas, and road infrastructure projects in our fastest-growing counties, to name a few. This would include \$77 million for economic development projects, \$226 million for the State Highway Partnership Program, \$176 million for the Rural Interchange Improvement Program, \$100 million for IMPROVE Act Acceleration; \$4 million for enhanced litter removal, and \$3.5 million for the Transportation Equity Fund.

Grant period now open for volunteer firefighter equipment, training funds

The grant period for the Tennessee Volunteer Firefighter Equipment and Training Grant program has opened.

The program for this fiscal year was expanded to \$1 million to assist volunteer firefighters. The application period opened Jan. 18, 2022, and will close at 2 p.m. CST on Friday, Feb. 28, 2022.

The Volunteer Firefighter Equipment and Training Grant was passed by the General Assembly in 2019 and became effective on January 1, 2020. The grant program has two components:

Reimburse the local cost share (typically 5% or 10% of the total award depending on population) of a federally awarded grant to a volunteer fire department for the purchase of firefighting equipment and training.

Allows volunteer fire departments to apply directly to the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) for firefighting equip-

To be eligible for the Volunteer Firefighter Equipment and Training Grant Program, departments must hold a valid recognition certificate from the SFMO and have a staff comprised by less than 51% full-time career firefighters.

For more information, visit https://www.tn.gov/commerce/ fire/departments/grant-opportu-

TDEC announces new round of TEAP grants

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) will accept applications beginning Monday, Jan. 17 for grants from the state's Tire Environmental Act Program (TEAP).

The grants are to fund projects that create or expand uses for waste tires. Such projects include tire recycling and processing, using materials such as aggregate that are derived from tires, initiating research and development in tire management, using tires for alternative fuels, or promoting innovation in infrastructure.

"It is important to divert waste tires from our landfills," Greg Young, deputy commissioner for TDEC, said. "These grants provide financial assistance to those who want to join that effort. The program is a valuable tool to protect the environment, and we encourage Tennesseans to be involved."

Tennessee produces approximately 6 million waste tires every year. The Tire Environmental Act Program has helped divert more than 3.6 million tires. The Tennessee General Assembly established the Tire Environmental Fund in 2015. Since then, grantees have been awarded almost \$4.5 million.

Entities eligible to apply for TEAP grants include local governments, non-profits, higher education institutions, K-12 schools and for-profit entities. The deadline for submitting proposals is April 15.

Further information on the program is available online at the TEAP website. Information about the TDEC grants management system is available at https://www.tn.gov/ environment/about-tdec/grants/ program-areas.html.

The fund is built through a flat fee assessed to the sale of new motor vehicles in Tennessee based on the number of wheels of the vehicle. The fee is \$5 for a vehicle with four or fewer wheels, \$10 for vehicles with more than four but fewer than 11 wheels, and \$15 for vehicles with 11 or more wheels.

These are reimbursement grants, meaning an applicant will need to have start-up capital. The minimum grant request is \$10,000, and the maximum grant request is \$1 million, with varying levels of matching funds required. Applicants must demonstrate how their project will improve or enhance beneficial end uses for scrap tires.

Three cities receive of site development grants

Three cities are among 12 recipients of approximately \$8.3 million worth of new site development grant funds.

Tennessee. Gov. Bill Lee and Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe announced that Cookeville, Fayetteville, and Shelbyville are among the dozen entities that received the grants, which are designed to help communities achieve Select Tennessee site certification. In addition to preparing industrial sites for economic development projects, the funding helps communities invest in infrastructure and engineering improvements on project-ready sites.

The city of Cookeville has received \$25,200 for complete due diligence studies on its Lemon-Farris site while Shelbyville received \$1 million to construct sewer line to its Highway 231 North Business Park. Additionally, the city of Favetteville received \$1 million in conjunction with Lincoln County for the preparing and grading of the Fayetteville/Lincoln County Industrial Park.

Macon County also received \$1 million to assist with the purchase of a site for inclusion in the Lafayette/Macon Industrial Park.

Other entities receiving funds including the Anderson County Economic Development Association, Decatur County, Dickson



The Highway 231 North Business Park in Shelbyville.

County, Grundy County, the Perry County Industrial Board, the Loudon County Economic Development Agency, the Henderson County Joint Economic and Community Development Board, and Washington County.

"Thanks to the support of the General Assembly, the Site Development Grants program will enhance an additional 12 industrial sites for future economic development projects," Lee said. "I remain committed to rural Tennessee, and these grants will help our communities attract jobs and support economic growth across our state."

The Site Development Grant program, part of the Rural Economic Opportunity Act, works in tandem with TNECD's Select Tennessee program. Since 2016, TNECD has awarded 127 Site Development Grants across the state,

totaling more than \$47 million in assistance to local communities.

"The Site Development Grants program is essential to our Tennessee communities as it not only helps to create shovel-ready sites but serves as a catalyst for achieving the ultimate goal of Select Tennessee site certification," Rolfe said. "We look forward to seeing the communities' successes that follow this latest round of awards."

Applications were reviewed by an advisory committee made up of TNECD, Austin Consulting, the Tennessee Valley Authority, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and Tennessee Department of Trans-

Each application was supported by the community's senator and representatives in the Tennessee General Assembly.

41 municipalities share in CDBG grants

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe recently approved \$28.5 million in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which will assist communities with infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitations and health and safety initiatives.

There are 41 municipalities among the 62 total entities that will be receiving shares of the \$28.5 million.

"Investing in local infrastructure is one of our top priorities, and these funds will play a vital role as communities work to update their assets and keep their communities safe," said Gov. Lee. "These recipients are proactively preparing their communities for future economic opportunities and continued growth."

"Community Development ock Grants are an end asset to communities across Tennessee," Rolfe said. "The 62 communities receiving CDBG funding will be better equipped for future economic opportunities, which in turn, will help our state continue to grow and succeed. I congratulate these recipients and look forward to seeing the successes in each community in the years to come."

The allocation of CDBG funds is based on priorities set through the public meeting process at the local community level.

The CDBG program is funded through HUD and administered in Tennessee by the Department of Economic and Community Development. Funds are available for water and sewer improvements and new extensions, housing rehabilitation and health and safety projects.

For more information on the CDBG program, visit https:// www.tn.gov/ecd/community-development-block-grant/cdbg.

Altamont Water System Improvements \$630. Bethel Springs Water System Improvements \$313. Bolivar Sewer System Improvements \$361. Brighton Drainage Improvements \$326. Brownsville Sewer System Improvements \$630. Bruceton Sewer System Improvements \$511, Carthage Fire Protection \$296. Celina Sewer System Improvements \$630. Cookeville Sewer System Improvements \$630. Decatur Water System Improvements \$630. Decherd Emergency Warning System \$130. Ducktown Water System Improvements \$630. Englewood Sewer System Improvements \$630.	,049 ,000 ,679 ,000 ,750 ,024
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Graysville Fire Protection \$420	,000
Harriman Water System Improvements \$630	,000
Harrogate Sewer Line Extension \$474	,030
Huntsville Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Jacksboro Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Jamestown Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Jefferson City Sewer System Improvements \$629	,993
Lawrenceburg Street Light Improvements \$268	,180
Lewisburg Sewer System Improvements \$450	,000
Loudon Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Luttrell Sewer System Improvements \$524	,342
Mason Water Line Extension \$431.	,935
Mount Carmel Water System Improvements \$476	,182
Oakdale EMS Improvements \$290	,535
Oneida Water System Improvements \$630	,000
Pulaski Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Rutherford Water System Improvements \$276	,854
Saltillo Emergency Warning System \$112,	,601
Savannah Sewer System Improvements \$600	,000
South Carthage Housing Rehabilitation \$298	,100
Spring City Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Springfield Sewer System Improvements \$630	,000
Stanton Sewer System Improvements \$513	,188
Surgoinsville Water System Improvements \$468	,700
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Baxter, Monterey receive USDA broadband grants

Two Tennessee towns are among the recipients of \$163 million in USDA investments bringing and expanding high-speed internet, water, and electric power to rural America.

The USDA announced Tennessee agencies will receive \$163 million of \$5.2 billion being invested in rural communities across the nation. The towns of Baxter and Monterey are among those sharing in these funds and will benefit from investments.

Baxter will use a \$1.5 million loan and a \$1.5 million grant to upgrade its wastewater treatment plan, including several infrastructure upgrades to the plant and one sewer pump station. This will allow the town to remove health and safety issues they are currently experiencing and ultimately provide safe and sanitary wastewater service to approximately 1,350 customers.

Monterey will use a \$500,000

loan and a \$2 million grant to complete the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant. The new plant will improve the town's ability to treat wastewater which will improve the quality of life and the environment for more than 1,900 customers.

The town of Surgoinsville will benefit from a \$306,000 loan and \$219,000 grant to upgrade the water infrastructure in the Phipps Bends Industrial Park. These upgrades include the installation of 900 LF of 12" waterline which will allow the creation of loops in the system providing additional redundant supply routes during periods of system isolations. The project will also restore a 750,000-gallon water storage tank located within the park.

The municipalities of Morrison and Viola will benefit from a \$1 million loan to the West Warren-Viola Utility District to improvements to the wastewater treatment plant located in Morrison. The improvements consist of new sequencing batch reactor equipment and electrical upgrades.

Other investments include a \$186,000 loan and \$219,00 grant to the Sneedville Utility District to extend water service to the Newman's Ridge community, a \$150 million loan to the Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) to connect 13,200 consumers in seven Tennessee and five Kentucky counties, a \$325,531 grant to Ben Lomand Communications to expand fiber internet services in Franklin County, a \$3 million grant to the Scott County Telephone Cooperative to extend fiber service to Grainger and Hawkins counties as well as parts of Virginia, and a \$2.8 million grant to the West Kentucky Rural Telephone Cooperative Corporation to extend fiber services to Weakley and Carroll counties in Tennessee and Kentucky.

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NATIONAL BRIEFS



The SAT is getting shorter and will be available entirely online, a move prompted by the pandemic and concerns the test is no longer relevant. The College Board announced a new two-hour digital test will be provided starting in the U.S. in 2024. The College Board, which administers the SAT, PSAT and other college-entrance exams, announced a number of other changes to the test including shorter reading passages focusing on a wider variety of topics and allowing students to use calculators. Officials said the digital format will also allow students to receive their rules in a matter of days instead of weeks. Students will have to take the digital test at a testing

The U.S. economy bounced back sharply in the fourth-quarter of 2021 posting its best growth since 1984. The nation's gross domestic product increased at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 6.9% between October and December and posted a 5.7% rate of growth, the highest in nearly 40 years. The economy also generated a record 6.4 million new jobs, despite the ongoing pandemic. Consumer activity – which makes up 70% of economic activity, rose 3.3% during the fourth quarter. Economists are predicted this growth to continue through 2022 provided there are no additional adverse effects from further variants.

More than half of teachers say they plan to quit the profession earlier than expected with re-

cord-high numbers of teachers experiencing burnout from the job. A recent survey from the National Education Association (NEA) found that 55% of teachers plan to leave the profession sooner than originally planned with 86% saying they have seen more educators leave the profession or retire early since the start of the pandemic. Approximately 90% of respondents said they feel burnout is a serious problem among teachers and 80% report their school has job openings that have led to more obligations for those who remain on staff. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported there are 567,000 fewer educators in America's public schools now than there were before the pandemic, and NEA data indicates that 43% of open teaching positions are going unfilled.

TENNESSEE

March 4-6: Pigeon Forge

Annual Chuck Wagon Cook-off Weekend

FESTIVALS

Pigeon Forge invites Western lifestyle enthusiasts, foodies and those in search of a hearty meal to the new Chuck Wagon Cookoff competition. Chuck wagons will gather at Clabough's Campground for this one-of-a-kind outdoor cooking event. For more info, visit https://www.mypigeonforge.com/ event/cookoff

March 19: Bell Buckle

Daffodil Day

Celebrating the coming of spring with the annual daffodil show, a barbecue cook-off, free tree seedlings, music, vendors, and more. For more info, visit https:// bellbucklechamber.com/event/ daffodil-day/

March 19: Erin

60th Annual Irish Festival Residents of Erin invite all to come celebrate the city's Irish heritage with the 60th Annual Irish Day Parade, Arts and Crafts Festival. For more info, visit http://houstoncochamber.com/community-events/ irish-day/

March 24-27: Knoxville

Big Ears Festival

The Big Ears Festival is Knoxville's biggest, boldest, and most dynamic festival experience. Over four days in March, the festival features the world's most celebrated performers and composers of our time. Big Ears is a weekend of surprise collaborations and unexpected artistic collisions, celebrating the never-ending adventure of creation and exploration. For more info, visit https://bigearsfestival.

March 25-26: Linden

14th Annual Blooming Arts **Festival**

Blooming Arts Festival is Linden's annual signature event and one of the region's leading outdoor festivals. More than 150 artists registered in 2021, with attendance near 10,000. In addition to arts & crafts exhibitors, a full schedule of live music is planned for both days plus the always-popular Kids Zone, complete with rides and many fun activities. For more info, visit https://bloomingartsfestival.org/

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League will meet in regular

TML Board to meet March 14

public session on Monday, March 14, 2022, at 11 a.m. in the Nashville Meeting Room of the Doubletree Hotel, 315 4th Avenue North, Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, March 10, at the offices of the Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville. Additional information may be obtained from Jackie Gupton, 615-255-6416.

Bond Fund Board to meet March 14

Notice is hereby given that the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund Board of Directors will meet in regular public session on Monday, March 14, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., local time, in the Vanderbilt Room on the lobby level of the Doubletree Hotel at 315 Fourth Avenue North, Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. Some members of the board may participate in such meeting by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, March 10, at the offices of TMBF, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 502, in Nashville. Additional information may be obtained at 615-255-1561.



TDEC. TAUD to hold workshops in Tennessee Infrastructure Scorecard 2.0

AG Slatery announces development in \$26B opioid settlement

2021 State of the Child Report reflects pandemic impacts



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Ed Stewart, ChFC, CLU, CF **Financial Advisor**

Memphis, Nashville museums join U.S. Civil Rights Trail in Tennessee

By KATE COILTML Communications Specialist

Two musical landmarks have joined 12 other sites on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail in Tennessee.

Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) and Travel South announced the National Museum of African American Music in Nashville and the Stax Museum of American South Music in Memphis have been added to the trail, which includes sites important to Tennessee and African-American history throughout the state.

Mark Ezell, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and secretary/treasurer of the U.S Civil Rights Trail Marketing Alliance, said both museums show how music helped fuel the Civil Rights movement.

"What happened in Tennessee changed the world and through the power of music of the movement, visitors can learn about that legacy at world-class destinations like Stax and NMAAM," Ezell said. "Visitors can walk in the footsteps of the brave men and women who stood up for equal rights. Our state's history and heritage shine a light on the triumphant and impactful stories at these destinations."

The National Museum of African American Music, which just celebrated its one-year anniversary, is dedicated to preserving and celebrating the many music genres created, influenced and inspired by African Americans

The "One Nation Under a Groove"

gallery is focused on how music inspired the Civil Rights Movement and evolved with the issues of the day. Educational programs, programming and events spotlight the achievements and influences of African American music.

"From the covert messages embedded in 'Wade in the Water' to the stirring melodies of 'What's Going On,' African American music

has provided the soundtrack for Civil Rights Movements in the United States," said H. Beecher Hicks, President and CEO of the National Museum of African American Music. "We are proud to continue our work in preserving and celebrating African Americans' contributions and influence on the American Soundtrack."

In Memphis, the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, located on the original site of Stax Records studio since 2003, pays special tribute to the artists who recorded there, as well as other American soul legends. Many of the artists and musicians who recorded at Stax were from the surrounding neighborhood, local churches and schools.

In a time when racial tension was high, the studio was integrated from day one, focusing on producing its own sound, a Memphis sound. Stax launched its second annual Virtual Black History Month Tour, which is available at no cost to educators and students throughout the world.

'Our launch of the Stax Museum's Virtual Black History Month Tour couldn't be more in line with the announcement that the museum is now being added as an iconic location on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail," said Stax Museum Executive Director Jeff Kollath. "More than just a label that recorded some of the most indelible, timeless music in history, Stax Records provided a company culture that was inclusive and where people of all races and genders worked together like family at a time of extreme racism and sexism in the United States and particularly in Memphis and the South. Both our new status on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail and the launch of our Virtual Black History Month tour reflect that rich history and how it still applies to current events."

Another Memphis site already on the trail, the Clayborn Temple, has also been expanded to include the "I AM A MAN" Plaza, which features a sculpture alongside a wall filled with the names of those who participated and rallied in the historic 1968 Memphis sanitation strikes. The city of Memphis dedicated the sculpture and memorial in 2018 as part of the MLK50 celebrations in the city. Clayborn Temple itself served as a meeting place for the strike. Which brought Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.

In addition to the Clayborn Temple, there are 11 other sites throughout the state featured on the U.S. Civil Rights trail, which debuted in 2018.

Clinton is home to the Green-McAdoo Cultural Center, which commemorates the Clinton 12 who were the first African-American students to integrate a public high school in the South. While the students fought to integrate Clinton High School in 1956, the Green-McAdoo Cultural Center was the formerly all-black elementary school all of the members had attended and the location of a bronze sculpture dedicated in 2006 in their honor. The Clinton 12 are all members



Otis Redding, Booker T. and the MGs, Sam & Dave, Eddie Floyd, Isaac Hayes, Wilson Pickett, The Staple Singers, Jean Knight, Eddie Floyd, Luther Ingram, and Teena Marie are just some of the iconic artists who recorded under the Stax Records label. In addition to musical acts, the label produced records for African-American comedians and Civil Rights speeches. The Stax Museum preserves this legacy.



of the Clinton High School Hall of Fame.

The Stax Museum and "I AM A MAN" Plaza at Clayborn Temple join four other sites in Memphis including the Beale Street Historic District, National

Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel, Mason Temple Church of God in Christ, and the WDIA Radio Station.

The Beale Street Historic District was originally established in 1841. Following the yellow fever epidemic in the 1870s, former slaves were able to acquire property in the area boosting the city's population to the point it regained its municipal charter. One of the developments built in the area by former slave Robert Church was a 2,000-seat auditorium that began to draw blues musicians from around the Delta region.

While most associated with the "Beale Street Blues," and artists like Muddy Waters, Louis Armstrong, and B.B. King, the district was also home to Ida B. Wells anti-segregationist newspaper Free Speech and many black-owned businesses. Beale Street was an important location for Memphians during the Civil Rights era and the Sanitation Workers Strike walked down Beale Street.

The National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel marks the location where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated



The National Museum of African-American Music in Nashville highlights the contributions of African-Americans to American music for more than 400 years. The museum's One Nation Under a Grove exhibit pays particular focus to how music was an important part of the Civil Rights Movement and helped bridge the gap between different groups throughout the years. The gallery takes its name from the epoynmous song by the band Funkadelic released in 1978.

in 1968 as well as tells the story of the Civil Rights movement. The museum chronicles 400 years of African-American history including the bus Rosa Parks rode on, the Greyhound Coach taken by Freedom Riders, and more. The Mason Temple Church of God and Christ was the location of King's famed "Mountaintop" Speech and is presently administered by the National Civil Rights Museum as well.

WIDA is the first radio station in the country programmed entirely for a black audience and began airing in 1947 from Union Avenue in downtown Memphis. In addition to starting the careers of numerous African-American artists, the station helped fundraise for community members including providing transportation for disabled students, financing college scholarships, and sponsoring clubs and sports teams for children.

The National Museum of African-American Music in Nashville joins six other sites in the city including the Civil Rights Room at the Nashville Public Library, Clark Memo-

rial United Methodist Church, the Davidson County Courthouse Witness Walls, Fifth Avenue Historic District, Fisk University, and Griggs Hall at American Baptist College.

The story of the Nashville sit-ins – of which the late. U.S. Rep. John Lewis was an organizer – are chronicled both at the Civil Rights Room at the Nashville Public Library and at sites like Woolworth's on Fifth, one of the sit-in locations in the Fifth Avenue Historic District.

Many of the students involved in the sit-ins came from Fisk University, which was founded in 1866 and became the first African-American the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school is also home to the famed Fisk Jubilee Singers. Griggs Hall at American Baptist College is another important education site, producing Civil rights leaders like John Lewis, Julius Scruggs, Bernard LaFayette, Jim Bevel, and William Barbee under the guidance of Professor J.F. Grimmett, the Rev. Kelly Miller Smith and the Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian.

Nashville's Clark Memorial United
Methodist Church was an important gathering place in the city during the Civil Rights movement. Nonviolent protest workshops were held at the church by James Lawson in 1958 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. held the annual meeting of the Southern Christian Leadership Con-

ference there in 1961. An important meeting between Nashvillians and Mayor Ben West took place on the steps of the Davidson County Courthouse in 1960, following the bombing of a local civil rights attorney's home. During the meeting, West admitted that segregation was immoral and advocated for the integration of the city's lunch counters. This would be the first major step toward the desegregation of Nashville. Today, the Witness Walls at the courthouse tell the story of the people and places who took part in local civil rights history.

To learn more about Tennessee sites on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, visit https://civilrightstrail.com/state/tennessee/.



The "I AM A MAN" Plaza in the shadows of the Clayborn Temple honors the Memphis Sanitation Workers whose strike in 1968 brought Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the city.